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13 July 2024 · Follow

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Basic Acute COVID Care (version 1)

As I recover from another COVID infection, I've been taking notes (and naps) to create more resources for us to be able to take care of ourselves and our communities. There are quite a few guides (some are linked at the bottom), and a growing abundance of studies about how to reduce harm from COVID infections and avoid and treat Long COVID. I know firsthand how scary and overwhelming it is to realize you have COVID and feel like you need to find all these guides and studies and somehow buy all of these supplements all at once when you know that more than anything, you need to rest (and when you know you don't have hundreds of dollars to drop on a dime).

This post is for people who may have been exposed to COVID, have symptoms, or have tested positive. This is a nonexhaustive list of no or low cost interventions to care for yourself. This is for folks with limited resources. I'm writing this from the perspective of not having a caretaker of any kind, so if you have partners, roommates, or other present loved ones please lean on them too! I hope this can help ground you. I'm throwing this together by request real quick so I won't be citing any studies or getting into a lot of detail, but I plan to have more extensive resources ready to share soon.

- Mask around other humans and creatures. Of course. Know that your pets can get COVID too and try to keep your distance as much as you can. Stop the spread. If you can't afford respirators, check out the COVID Action Map for mask mutual aid groups near you!

- Assume it's COVID, but whether you have testing resources or not, whether you're testing positive or not, you are ill and you deserve and need to be well taken care of to recover. Given how intentionally inept our government is at handling pandemics, there are a lot of dangerous pathogens in the general public, so play it safe and let go of the notion that acute sytemic infections are "just a cold."

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when you need to get out of bed/off the

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couch/up from whatever comfortable spot you're spending time in, move slowly. Keep your heart rate low. Be gentle with yourself.

- Do not exercise and avoid as much exertion as you are able to for at least 8 weeks. One of the most crucial interventions for not getting Long COVID, not worsening Long COVID, and/or improving your post-acute COVID infection outcome is to REST.

- Rest aggressively, and when you do start to re-incorporate any exercise (after at minimum two months!), don't even try to press your limits. Start slow, stay low impact, monitor your vitals and be vigilent about whether increasing activities are leading to Post Exertion Malaise (PEM).

- If you are chronically ill or disabled, take stock. By this I mean be mindful of what risks are associated with your conditions and COVID so you know what complications to watch out for, what symptoms might be more serious than others.

- Avoid as much mental and physical exertion as you can (I know I'm repeating myself here, this is important!). For some, lying there doing nothing will cause more stress and worsen symptoms (myself included). So turn on a comfort show, something you've seen many times before so you don't need to focus in any way to follow along. Or listen to familiar music, podcasts, whatever low-effort media that will be comforting and require minimal exertion to experience.

- Stay hydrated. Make sure your increase in water intake is matched by an intake in salt/electrolytes. Drink as much tea as you have the energy and supplies to make.

- Find a good balance between ventilation and keeping the temperature comfortable. I'm writing this in July, and it's hot as hell. Stay cool and make sure there's good air flow too.

- Take notes. Track your symtoms, note what foods, herbs, and drinks make you feel better, what makes you feel worse. COVID and trauma can both affect your memory, so this information will be helpful in the future if you need to recount how your body was affected and how best to take care of yourself.

- COVID can also cause you to develop new allergies, so if you have any allergic/inflammatory reactions to anything (from foods to cleaning products to skin care, etc.), discontinue use and make a note of this.

- If you have a high fever, you can drink cold beverages, use cold compresses, take a luke warm bath (with epsom salts if possible!), and take NSAIDS. I also use oil of oregano and cloves for fevers as herbal aids. I specified HIGH fever here because I do not suggest s onse) unless they are potentially going to

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cause more harm than they help in fighting off the virus.

- If you have congestion, a headache, or are feeling head pressure, you can do a facial steam. This involves boiling a pot of water and holding your head over it with a towel over you to trap in the steam (turn the heat off the stove or remove the pot from the stove before you do this). You can add herbs to this too (mints, eucalyptus, thyme, red raspberry leaf, lemon balm, etc.). You can also run a hot shower so it's like a sauna but sit your ass down to do this.

- Vapor rubs and any mint/menthol/spiced salve on your chest can be really helpful not only for congestion but also for headaches and nausea.

- If you have a humidifier, run it. You can also add hypochlorous acid to humidifiers/difusers as an extra measure to minimize viral loads.

- Your nervous system and your emotions are just as important as your other physical symptoms. Do what you can to keep calm. If you're feeling panicky, try holding an icecube in your hand, icing your vagus nerve (center chest), sour candy, tapping on your chest, benzos, antihistamines, stimming, meditating, dunking your face in ice water, taking a cold shower, or any comfort activity (such as playing a game or watching a show). It's better to spend a little energy doing something that will calm you down than it is to have a panic attack.

- If you have a headache or any other symtoms with your vision make sure you keep your room or the space you are resting in dark, keep the brightness on your devices low and the volume low too.

- If you are able to, and if it doesn't make you feel worse, spend some time in the sunlight. Fresh air and vitamin D can be refreshing.

- Keep ceiling fans on. There's recent research that shows that ceiling fans can help mitigate additional COVID spread and that will help you minimize the COVID you're re-inhaling or spreading too.

- If you have air purifiers, run them on high. If you don't, you can construct one with a box fan or otherwise stationary fan and any filter material (such as furnace filters, but you can get creative. Tape some surgical masks on the back of a fan, do your best).

- Oral hygiene and dental health steps, in fact up your game if you can. Use hydrogen peroxide, alcohol, or hypochlorous acid on your toothbrush and tongue scraper after every use to sanitize. If you have CPC mouthwash, use it more often than you were already. REPLACE YOUR TOOTHBRUSH AFTER YOU ARE NO LONGER INFECTIOUS!

- [illegible] are basic antihistamines that you may already

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have on hand that can help treat COVID.

- Prioritize probiotic foods, soups, vegetables, fruits, and nourishing meals as much as you are able to.

- Keep in mind that COVID is harmful to your immune system. So be vigilant of secondary infections. If you have a cut or a scrape, even if it's just a papercut, keep it clean and bandaged.

- Saline nasal rinses and gargling with salt water will both reduce your viral load. Do them as often as you are able to. Only use DISTILLED water for your nasal rinses. You can buy gallons of distilled water for $1-$2 each.

- For nausea, you can sniff alcohol wipes/alcohol in general as well as essential oils such as mint and citrus.

- Herbs/medicinals you may already have at home that have antiviral properties or are otherwise good for common COVID symptoms: honey, black pepper, cayenne, cloves, cinnamon, ginger, thyme, oregano, honey, tumeric, curry, coriander, garlic, onion (honestly herbs and spices in general all have medicinal properties, get creative with what you have as needed and be intentional about checking for any interactions with the medications and supplements you are taking).

- If you smoke weed, don't force yourself to stop unless your respiratory symptoms are intense or it's making you feel worse. That is your medicine. THC is antiCOVID. The less yor body is dysregulated the better. Don't smoke out of dirty glass. Not to be your mom but clean your goddamn bong.

- If you're feeling congestion, especially in your chest, sit up/elevate your head more. Try to avoid lying on your back for too many extended periods, as that can exacerbate fluid buildup in your lungs. If one side feels worse than the other, try lying on the other side.

- Coffee, black tea, and green tea (including matcha) all have antiviral properties. Though it's a good idea to minimize caffeine intake, incorporating these/keeping them in your routine is a better idea.

- Some inexpensive supplements that you can prioritize (and may already have) are D3 (better if paired with K2 as well), Zinc, C, melatonin.

- If you're going to start any new medications or supplements, make sure you are thoroughly checking the drug interactions on any meds you're already on. Have someone help you do th[illegible] se heart meds make Paxlovid poisonous to me)

- Don't be afraid to ask for help. There are a lot of disabled people online who really know

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their shit. There are no invalid questions, and it is okay to ask around when you feel overwhelmed (I did!).

- Putting your legs straight up the wall can help with blood pooling and lymph drainage. If you're spending a lot of time horizontal (which you should be!) this can be a good idea to prevent blood pooling and any discomfort that comes with that.

- Gua sha/facial massages can help with sinus pressure.

- Staying still and in bed is good for COVID recovery but can be really uncomfortable and unhelpful when it comes to other conditions. Gentle abdominal massages may help with digestion (use castor oil or whatever oil you have on hand). Gentle self massages may help with chronic pain. Gentle stretches may help with circulation and chronic pain. Some folks have gotten a lot of relief from dry brushing/lymph draining massages. Gentle is the keyword.

- If conjunctivitis is one of your symptoms, or if you are experiencing dry/weepy eyes, hypochlorous acid can treat and prevent conjunctivitis and warm compresses (bonus for green tea soaked) can really alleviate symptoms. There are also antihistamine eyedrops you may look into.

I'll add to this list as I think of things! And as I said, more to come. - Plague Prose

More guides for acute COVID infection care, Long COVID care, and viral infection care in general:

People's CDC: https://peoplescdc.org/2023/01/10/what-to-do-if-you-have-covid/

Polycultured: https://www.polycultured.com/herbalantivirals

Long COVID PharmD: https://pharmd.substack.com/p/i-have-covid-what-should-my-kids

COVID Recovery Resources https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Ofz_g8WZosyYDcrSlOKY3mo9JRvtc_kSRKnKKqcL0UI/mobilebasic

Supplements UPDATED_NOV 2023.pdf https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/nrydx07ddr5951j15kynz/Supplements-UPDATED_NOV-2023.pdf?rlkey=grogcb81ryfdhbbxhslvixzb3&e=1&dl=0

Urban Indian Health Institute: https://drive.google.com/file/c/[illegible]/view?pli=1

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Stephen Harrod Buhner - Herbal Antivirals https://cryptpad.fr/file/#/2/file/1LYl1qRG3dk7Ay4BDXRN3Srd/

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